

### **Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the subject application.

### **Listing of Claims:**

What is claimed is:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

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Filing Date: January 8, 2004

Title: Apparatus and Process for Forming Pet Treats

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13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing an animal chew comprising: (a) providing a base material and a preheated binder and forming a mixture, wherein said mixture has a

selected moisture level "x"; (b) introducing and further mixing said mixture in a screw conveyor wherein the temperature of the mixture in the screw conveyor is maintained at a temperature of at or below about 200° F and a shear rate at or below  $10^4$  ( $\text{sec}^{-1}$ ) and said moisture level is reduced to a final moisture level "y" wherein  $y < x$ ; (c) introducing the product of step (b) on to rollers which form a sheet and wherein said rollers provide cooling; (d) introducing the product of step (c) into a cooled chamber at a selected temperature; (e) cutting said product of step (d) into a desired shape.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26 wherein the base material is an edible material.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 27 wherein the edible material is selected from the group consisting of starch, rice meal, soybean, casein, denatured and partially hydrolyzed casein, protein, rawhide, dairy, meat by-products, plant, vegetable matter or animal matter, and mixtures thereof.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26 wherein said cooled chamber comprises a cooling tunnel.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26 wherein the moisture level "x" is at or below 50% (wt).

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein "y" is at or below 15% (wt).

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein "y" is between 10-12% (wt).

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26 wherein said preheated binder upon cooling serves to bind said mixture together.

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34. (Cancelled)

35. (Cancelled)